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privileges of French citizens; Dahomey, 121; Upper Volta, 17; Niger, 9. As late as 1936 out of a total population of fifteen million in French West Africa there were only 2,136 French citizens, with the exception of the citizens of the Four Towns or *Quatre Communes* of Senegal. Virginia Thompson and Richard Adloff in their book *French West Africa* have suggested that this was because at that time 'the advantages conferred by naturalisation obviously did not compensate in the eyes of the great majority of Africans for acceptance of French law in regard to marriage and inheritance, and for the general shaping of their lives according to the European pattern'. This was only half the truth. Just as important a factor was the sparseness of facilities for education, the keystone to a successful assimilationist policy. As late as 1947 only 1.3 per cent of children of school age in Guinea were actually attending school. In Soudan the figure was higher at 5 per cent, Dahomey 10 per cent and Senegal 12.4 per cent.

In each case Senegal is the exception. Senegal sent a deputy to the French Assembly as early as 1848. Her first indigenous deputy, Blaise Diagne, elected in 1914, became Under Secretary of State for the Colonies on several occasions before his death in 1934. But the other territories of French black Africa did not elect deputies until 1946, though they sent representatives to the Constituent Congress in 1945. In 1848 the privileges of French citizenship were granted to all Senegalese living in the Colony, though they were allowed to retain their private law in matters of land, inheritance, marriage and divorce. It was only in 1946 with the passing of the *loi Lamine Gueye* that the privileges of citizenship were granted to Africans other than those who obtained naturalisation, which involved accepting French private law. In Senegal, the towns of St. Louis and Gorée were created *communes de pleins exercice* or full scale municipal councils in 1872 and seven years later a General Council on the lines of those operating in the French departments was established.

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till the end of the nineteenth century, neglected the Protectorate and seemed to think that the only parts of the country that mattered were the four communes. Naturally their official business with the Protectorate was limited, but they did control the three main ports of the country through which the products of the interior passed to France. The councillors, too, restricted education largely to the communes, where on the whole it reached a satisfactory level. They even sent students on scholarships to France, but unfortunately too few of these returned to Senegal to use their newly acquired talents. It was not until the establishment of the Government-General of French West Africa in 1905 that educational facilities were extended to the Protectorate in any great measure.

The increase in education amongst citizens of African origin meant that by the turn of the nineteenth century they were less willing to accept European domination in the communes and the General Council. The assertion of their rights is one of the main factors behind the attempts of the administration to deprive the indigenous Senegalese of their position as *citoyens*. Actually the Administration was batting on a good wicket. Technically a French citizen was one who accepted French rights and duties without qualification. In the case of the Africans in Senegal they had been allowed to retain their own *statut personnel*, that is private law, with reference to civil disputes, matrimony, divorce, inheritance and land. But this seemed to conflict openly with the definition of a French citizen. It seemed wrong that a man should exercise the rights of a French citizen and not accept the consequent obligations. Many Frenchmen felt it quite illogical that an African with four wives could yet be a citizen. And indeed in later years the main obstacle to granting citizenship to other colonial peoples was to be the question of retention of the *statut personnel*. Thus many of the attempts by the French to deprive the Senegalese citizens of their rights were the result of quite genuine objections to the illogicality of their position. Faidherbe,

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Such was the outcry against this decree that a further decree in 1914 confirmed that 'all natives born in the four communes would be subject to French tribunals throughout the colony and in certain other places'. Indeed Lamine Guèye was one of the most ardent critics of France for her failure to accord the full rights of an assimilationist policy to the *originaires*. He protested against the way the Government opposed 'the entrance of all natives of whatever status they may be, into the general administrative services, even into military units stationed in the colony'. It was only by insistence on the right to do military service on equal terms with the French that the *originaires* were finally able to gain confirmation of their rights as citizens. In 1914 Blaise Diagne became the first Senegalese to sit in the Chamber of Deputies. He won his seat partly as a result of the split vote amongst his six European opponents, partly because he appealed to the Senegalese voters by his demands for complete equality between black and white. His particular platform was a pledge to vote for a law for obligatory military service without distinction of race or colour. In a letter to the Minister of Colonies he said the *originaires* did not want the privileges without the obligations of French citizenship. At the time, of course, France was just about to enter into the Great War and badly needed troops from Africa. Thus without much difficulty a law was passed providing for the conscription of the *originaires* as French troops. In return for Diagne's co-operation in recruiting troops for the war effort, the Government passed the Citizenship Law of 1916 which once and for all confirmed the status of the *originaires*. They could retain their *statut personnel* and need not understand French to be considered as citizens. 'The natives of the *communes de pleine exercice* and their descendants are and remain French citizens subject to the military obligations of the Law of 19 October 1915.' The rider about the status of 'descendants' was of particular importance to Lamine Guèye who was born in Soudan of *originaire* parents.

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and juridical rights. The old signs of inequality, the *indigénat* and the hated corvée were to be withdrawn, the latter after a period of five years. Education was to remain exclusively French, though Eboué put in a plea for the recognition of the values of traditional society. The problems of granting French citizenship to Africans without prejudicing their *statut personnel* was to be solved within the framework of the proposed Federal Parliament for France and her overseas territories. Africans would thus have citizenship of this larger Federation rather than of France itself and would not therefore have to give up their *statut personnel*. The new principle was first applied in March 1944. French citizenship was extended to a number of Muslims in Algeria who were allowed to retain their *statut personnel*, on the same terms as the *originaires* of Senegal had been. Finally the conference proposed a large scale development programme for the overseas territories.

In the Constituent Assembly which was to deliberate on the constitution of the Fourth Republic, sixty-four seats were given to overseas deputies, a fair number going to Africans. Two socialists from Senegal, Lamine Guèye and his lieutenant Léopold Sédar Senghor, the first African to become a *professeur agrégé* of the Sorbonne, played a leading role in the debates of the new constitution, attacking remnants of Vichy racialism amongst colonial officials, decrying the ban on freedom of meeting and association, and above all denouncing the corvée and *indigénat*. The first Constituent Assembly of 1945, liberal in outlook, was deeply concerned as to how the Republic could remain one and indivisible and yet accord any degree of autonomy to the overseas territories. This was settled by proposing that the overseas territorial assemblies be thought of as equivalent to the *conseils* of the metropolitan department just as that of Senegal had been. The colonies, instead of forming a federation with France as proposed at the Brazzaville Conference, were to participate in a French Union much more integrationist in character and within

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Council in Senegal but differed little in competence. The only concession made to Senegal and not to the other territories, and this undoubtedly being influenced by its political history, was the retention of a single college electorate as against the dual colleges prescribed for all other territories. The French penal code was made generally applicable for Senegal. In January 1946 the three *communes de pleine exercice* (Gorée had by then been incorporated in Dakar) were given full municipal status as equivalent French towns. Finally and most important, forced labour was legally abolished; but it survived in covert forms for several years to come. In Senegal, Senghor received the full credit for this measure from his peasant electorate and has been drawing political dividends from it ever since.

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668 against the society (which he has so brilliantly elucidated)—where do I stand in relation to that culture?'

Alioune Diop declared:

> Assimilation corresponds to a type of human relationship imposed by colonisation. It demands that the individual (for it affects only individuals) tear himself from his natural context and he who cannot assert his own personality must replace his habits of thinking, feeling and acting by others which he would only share with a foreign community.

By the time of this congress the Senegalese, as well as other Africans, had examined pretty thoroughly the whole question of French assimilation. For instance, A. Wade, a Senegalese, in a paper entitled 'Must Africa evolve a [671] positive law?', protested against the use in his country of a foreign legal system evolved in a different social context and which could not meet all the requirements of traditional society. He called for a new legal system which would be in effect a synthesis of African customary law and French law. In another article he called for a reform of teaching methods in Africa in the light of local conditions. There [591] were few stones this anti-assimilationist élite left unturned in their efforts to re-establish the values of the African past. They presented a dramatic contrast with the élite of the pre-war generation who, like the young men in Ousmane Socé Diop's *Karim*, so readily accepted the virtues of Western ways.

668 Amongst this group were a number who fell back not on
648 the values of the African past so much as Marxist theories in their attacks on colonialism and assimilationist policy. Principal amongst this group was Majhemout Diop, leader of the pro-Communist *Parti Africain de l'Indépendence*. [665] In issue No. 14 of *Présence Africaine* he attacked colonialism bitterly:

> There is no possible ambiguity; colonisation equals capitalistic enterprise. Any other explanation is invalid, is deceitful, a myth, a myth of civilisation and of co-operation.
>
> A coloniser cannot be humanitarian . . . that would be the